Author’s response to reviews

Title: Materials for pulpotomy in immature permanent teeth: a systematic review and metaanalysis

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Title: Materials for pulpotomy in immature permanent teeth: a systematic review and meta-analysis

Dear Prof. Hakan Arslan,

We thank you and the reviewer and editor for the constructive comments and suggestions. We have carefully reviewed these comments and revised the manuscript accordingly. We believe the current version of the manuscript has been much improved. A document listing the authors’ response to comments from reviewers is attached.

If further modifications of our manuscript are needed, we are more than happy to revise it.

We look forward to hearing from you. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Yan Wang, D.D.S., Ph.D.

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Reviewer's Responses to Questions

Comments to the Author

Reviewer #1:

Luciana Oliveira (Reviewer 1): Dear authors,

This review suffers from some shortcomings that need to be addressed before publication.

Comments:

Abstract:

The Abstract should not exceed 350 words.

Please, complete the aim of the study.

Aim: The aim of this study was to conduct a systematic review in order to compare different pulpotomy dressing agents for pulpotomy treatment in immature permanent teeth.

Provide a structured summary including: background; objectives; data sources; study eligibility criteria, participants, and interventions; study appraisal and synthesis methods; results; limitations; conclusions and implications of key findings; systematic review registration number.

Response: We thank the reviewer for this suggestion. We have made revisions accordingly, since we did not register our project in advance, a registration number is not provided. (Abstracts section, page 2)

Methods:

- Protocol and registration: provide registration information including registration number.
Present full electronic search strategy for at least one database, including any limits used, such that it could be repeated. Response: We thank the reviewer for this suggestion. We are sorry that we have not registered this project yet, thus a registration number cannot be provided. As for search strategy, we are sorry we did not describe it clearly. The following search strategy summarized the initial search done in Pubmed: (pulpotomy OR pulpotomies OR pulp therapy OR pulp treatment OR pulp exposure) AND (permanent OR adult OR secondary) AND (random*), limited in ‘English’. This search strategy was adapted for each database search. (Materials and methods section, page 3)

Results:
Agreement between the two reviewers in the study selection was good. The calibration process is not clear in the methods.

Response: We thank the reviewer for this suggestion. We are so sorry for missing this important information in our previous manuscript and we added the calibration process accordingly in ‘Materials and methods’ section. The inter-examiner agreement was analyzed by the Cohen’s kappa statistics for the selection process and quality assessment process, and the values were 0.91 and 0.93 respectively. (Materials and methods section, page 4-5; Results section, page 5)

Discussion
The Discussion-section seems unfocused. Please, re-write this section considering the main aim of the study, description of principal findings, Strengths and weaknesses of the study, unanswered questions and future researches.

Response: We thank the reviewer for this suggestion. We have realized the shortcomings in this part and made revisions accordingly. If further modifications of our manuscript are needed, we are more than happy to revise it. (Discussion section, page 7-9)

Reviewer #2: Thanks for the opportunity to see this work. The key questions are succinctly and clearly defined in logical sequence. Language is clear and concise. Figure 1 is helpful. In general I think this review has been well conducted and well summarized.

Response: We thank the reviewer for this suggestion. However, there is some points need to be clarified;

line 41 page 5 in Data Collection and analysis, the authors wrote "When meta-analysis could not be performed, the data were summarized qualitatively", kindly clarify what meant by "summarized qualitatively" and which type of data was included.

Response: We thank the reviewer for this suggestion. Actually, for the data which could not be included in meta-analysis, we described and summarized it qualitatively. Usually, we would describe the data and conclusions as they were reported in original researches. For example,
when we compared the clinical and radiographic success rate of MTA with that of CH at different timepoints, we found only one research reported the outcomes of 18 and 24-month follow-up periods. Thus, we could not conduct meta-analysis for these data, and we only reported the clinical and radiographic success rate of MTA and CH respectively and described whether this result was significant or not.

In the part of ‘Data Collection and Analysis’, we only introduced the methods of data treatment, and specific results of data processing is presented in ‘Results’ part. After we collected the data from all included studies, the data would be judged if they can be assessed through meta-analysis. For those could not be included in meta-analysis, we only summarized them qualitatively. For example, if the data had huge heterogeneity, we will consider to drop up meta-analysis. Also, if the number of studies is too small to be combined in meta-analysis, we will only describe it qualitatively.

line 5 page 6, at 12-month outcome, the sentence need rephrasing as at 12 month of evaluation the number of teeth evaluated was 54 for MTA and 53 for CH.

Response: We thank the reviewer so much for this suggestion. We have made revisions accordingly.(Results section, page 6)